



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

Sandra Gioia Treadway
Librarian of Virginia

Library of Virginia Honors Women's History Month With a Panel Discussion Titled "A Woman's Place is in the House...of Delegates"

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RICHMOND, VIRGINIA – In honor of Women's History Month and as part of its 200th anniversary activities, the Library of Virginia will present a panel discussion on Wednesday, March 29 to celebrate a century of women in the Virginia House of Delegates. Titled "A Woman's Place is in the House...of Delegates," the free panel discussion will be held 6-7:30 p.m. in the Library's Lecture Hall. Advance registration is required at <https://lva-virginia.libcal.com/event/10267460>.

In 1923 the first women won election to the Virginia House of Delegates. In the century since then, 109 women have served in the House, with a record number of 37 women in 2023. A group of current House members will discuss the challenges, opportunities and changes they have experienced in Capitol Square.

Jennifer L. Lawless, Commonwealth Professor of Politics at the University of Virginia, will moderate the discussion. Her research focuses on political ambition, campaigns and elections, and media and politics. Lawless is the author or coauthor of six books, including *Women on the Run: Gender, Media, and Political Campaigns in a Polarized Era*.

Panelists for the program are:

- **Delegate Carrie E. Coyner**, a member since 2020, represents the 62nd House District, covering the City of Hopewell and parts of Chesterfield and Prince George Counties. A practicing attorney, she has served on numerous community boards, among them the Chesterfield County School Board and the board of the Chesterfield County Chamber of Commerce. In 2021 she received the Virginia School Boards Association Legislative Award of Excellence and the Virginia Manufacturers Association Industrial Strength Leadership Award. In 2020 she also served on the Task Force to Commemorate the Centennial Anniversary of Women's Right to Vote.
- **Delegate Charniele L. Herring**, a member since 2009, represents the 46th House District, which covers parts of the City of Alexandria. An attorney, Herring was the first woman and the first African American to serve as majority leader of the House of Delegates and as chair of the House Courts of Justice Committee. She previously served as chair of the Virginia State Crime Commission and currently serves as chair of the House Democratic Caucus.

- **Delegate Vivian E. Watts**, a member since 1996 (and previously 1982–1985), represents the 39th House District, which includes parts of Fairfax County. When she was elected in 1982, she was only the 22nd woman ever to serve in the General Assembly. After her first year in the House, she was voted the “Most Promising Freshman” delegate. Watts left the House to serve as Virginia’s Secretary of Transportation and Public Safety from 1986 to 1990. Returning in 1996, she is currently the longest-serving female member of the House.

“Virginia women fought hard in the early 20th century for the right to vote and hold public office, honing their political skills as they campaigned for woman suffrage,” Librarian of Virginia Sandra G. Treadway observed. “Still, it took more than 60 years for many of the issues women cared most deeply about to be taken seriously. The Library of Virginia is delighted to host this special 100th anniversary program highlighting the important contributions women have made from 1923 through the present day, with a record number of women now serving in the State Capitol.”

For more information on the panel discussion, contact Elizabeth Klaczynski at 804.692.3536 or elizabeth.klaczynski@lva.virginia.gov. Learn more about the Library’s anniversary events at www.lva.virginia.gov/200.

Related images are available here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/r5i92dc0tfp39k7/AABlBg-9bLW5eEA1g0yLDE2ta?dl=0>

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ABOUT THE LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

The Library of Virginia is the state’s oldest institution dedicated to the preservation of Virginia’s history and culture. Our online offerings attract nearly 3.8 million website visits per year, and our resources, exhibitions and events bring in more than 100,000 visitors each year. The Library’s collections, containing more than 130 million items, document and illustrate the lives of both famous Virginians and ordinary citizens. The Library is located in downtown Richmond near Capitol Square at 800 East Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219. Learn more at www.lva.virginia.gov.